

Gentlemen:

I live in a city with only one newspaper -- The Akron Beacon Journal. This is part of the Knight-Ridder chain.

Until recently it competed for Pulitzer Prizes and state "best newspaper" awards.

However, it has now drastically cut its "news hole" and laid off much of its editorial staff in an effort to make favorable margins during the current economic slump.

In the absence of any competitive choice it is unlikely that we will again see the rich coverage we enjoyed in the past.

We also had a local TV station with a home town news desk. This is gone now with several changes in ownership of the TV station into a chain controlled from distant points.

Our TV coverage comes from Cleveland -- 40 miles distant.

During sweeps periods the Cleveland stations open "Local Bureaus" in our area for brief periods. "Local Coverage" from Cleveland tends to mean 10-second clips on the high school football teams in season and the occasional spectacular murder.

The internet does nothing for local political and economic news. Neither do the national periodicals.

The current consolidation into national chains has already killed off much of the local dialog on current events.

Further amalgamation will cripple what little inter-media competition now exists.

Please REVERSE the current trends of consolidation.

It may be financially convenient for advertisers to buy nationwide coverage from a single entity but it hardly serves the national interests.